

REMARKS

The present application has been amended in response to the Examiner's Office Action to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicant, by the amendments presented above, has made a concerted effort to present claims which clearly define over the prior art of record, and thus to place this case in condition for allowance.

Each one of the independent claims has been amended to specifically claim (in the case of the apparatus claims) an Aluminum-Copper interconnect liner comprised primarily of Aluminum. Additionally, some of the dependent claims further specify that the interconnect liner layer is formed of Aluminum-0.5% Copper.

This is distinguishable from what is disclosed in Dubin et al. (US 2004/0000720 A1). Dubin et al. discloses a seed layer formed of either Copper, or an alloy comprised primarily of Copper. See section [0029] of Dubin et al. which identifies the following alloys: Copper-Tin, Copper-Indium, Copper-Bismuth, Copper Carbide, Copper-Aluminum, or Copper-Silver. In each case, Copper is listed first. Aluminum is included in one of the alloys, but the fact remains that the layer is not formed primarily of Aluminum as is now being specifically claimed. In fact, nowhere in Dubin et al. is it even remotely suggested to provide an interconnect liner layer formed primarily of Aluminum. Still further, the fact that layer 222 is disclosed in Dubin et al. as being a seed layer inherently suggests that the layer be provided as being the same material, or something very similar to, the conductor layer 230. Applicant respectfully submits that for the Examiner to read section [0029] of Dubin et al. (suggesting a seed layer formed of Copper or

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primarily Copper) and arrive at the present invention (an interconnect liner layer comprised primarily of Aluminum), the Examiner would be using hindsight.

Applicant respectfully submits that none of the cited references disclose or suggest providing an Aluminum-Copper alloy interconnect liner layer formed primarily of Aluminum in contact with Copper.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are allowable over the prior art of record, and respectfully requests that the application be passed to issuance.

Should the present claims not be deemed adequate to effectively define the patentable subject matter, the Examiner is respectfully urged to call the undersigned attorney of record to discuss the claims in an effort to reach an agreement toward allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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